

props of the Tory party then and in his own
 time. Croker,
 in his articles on Macaulay's History, in the
 Quarterly
 Review, made both charges. He devoted six
 pages to the
 defence of the country gentlemen, and nine to
 the defence of
 the clergy. The clergy were also defended
 at greater
 length by Churchill Babington (a Fellow of St.
 John's
 College, Cambridge) in Mr. Macaulay's
 Character of the
 Clergy in the Latter Part of the Seventeenth
 Century
 Considered, with an Appendix on the
 Character of the
 Gentry (1849). Mr. Gladstone, in an article on
 Sir George
 Trevelyan's Life of Macaulay,¹ held the
 refutation con-
 clusive, but that is going too far. Babington
 succeeds in
 showing that Macaulay sometimes
 misinterprets and some-
 times overstrains the evidence of the
 authorities he quotes,
 and that he omits to take into account much
 evidence that
 tells against his view, but he does not
 overthrow his main
 position as completely as devoted
 churchmen assume.
 The clergy were much poorer then than they
 were in Mac-
 aulay's time, but their political influence was
 very much
 greater. The educated and the learned clergy
 were mostly
 to be found in the towns ; many of the country
 clergy were
 extremely ignorant, and domestic chaplains
 often occupied
 a somewhat servile position. But when
 Macaulay said

that ' the clergy were regarded on the whole
as a plebeian
class ', and that ' for one who made the figure
of a gentle-
man ten were menial servants ', he weakened
his case by
his rhetorical extravagance. Lecky's
judgement on the
dispute is very just. After citing some fresh
evidence on
the position of the clergy he concludes :

It is clear that Macaulay greatly
understated the num-
ber of men of good family that entered the
Church, and his
picture is, perhaps, in other respects a little
over-coloured,

¹W. E. Gladstone, *Gleanings of Past Years* (1879), vol.
ii.